



*NEWS  
RELEASE*

Central Idaho Dispatch  
Salmon - Challis National Forest  
Upper Columbia - Salmon  
Clearwater District BLM  
50 Highway 93 South  
Salmon, Idaho 83467

---



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact: (208) 756-5177**

July 23, 2003 @1800

**Lemhi County Sheriff's Office Release the Names of Fallen Firefighters**

Two firefighters were killed yesterday when they were trapped by fast moving flames on the Cramer Fire. Lemhi County Sheriff Bret Barsalou has identified the firefighters as Jeff Allen, 24 of Salmon, Idaho, and Shane Heath, 22 from Idaho's Treasure Valley.

Jeff Allen, 24 has been a seasonal firefighter since 1999. He started working on the Salmon-Challis National Forest on the thinning crew on the Salmon-Colbalt District in 1998.

Jeff started on the helitack crew in Indianola, near North Fork, Idaho, in 1999 and he successfully fought the devastating fires of the year 2000 on the Salmon-Challis National Forest.

Jeff was a student majoring in general business at Boise State University.

Jeff was born and raised in Salmon, Idaho. His parents, Diz and Bill Allen still live in Salmon. Jeff's brother, Ryan, lives in Boise.

-MORE-

Shane Heath, age 22, was born and raised on a farm in the Treasure Valley area of Idaho. He always wanted to be a helicopter pilot, loved firefighting, and enjoyed sawyer work. He combined all three into his work as a seasonal firefighter for the Forest Service.

Shane was a Forest Service wildland firefighter for four years. He worked on the Bitterroot and Salmon-Challis National Forests. His most recent assignment was working on the Indianola helitack crew near North Fork, Idaho.

Shane was a student at Boise State University. He is survived by his parents, Steve and Jody Heath, a brother Zack and one sister, Lacey.

In a statement issued earlier today, Chief Dale Bosworth said, "On behalf of the entire Forest Service, I want to express my condolences to the families and friends of Jeff Allen and Shane Heath. Both young men were Forest Service employees who died protecting the lives and property of their fellow Americans. Fighting fires is an extremely dangerous profession and fire fighter safety is the number one priority on any fire. I am sure these firefighters had excellent training, equipment, and leadership. As we always do when there is loss of lives I sent an investigative team to Idaho to determine the cause of the fatalities."

The Cramer Fire is located 30-miles northwest of Salmon, Idaho on the Salmon-Challis National Forest. It is a steep, forested area with understory vegetation, and generally inaccessible. The pair of firefighters was taken by helicopter and were preparing for additional firefighting forces.

-MORE-

The Cramer fire started on July 20 when lightening struck in the extremely dry, heavy vegetation. The fire grew to 40 acres in a matter of hours. Twenty-four hours later the fire had burned across 200 acres of forested land. Burning conditions were extreme at the time the firefighters were killed – temperatures were well over 100°F, winds were gusting to 31 miles per hour, and the relative humidity was approximately 16%. The fire was estimated at 1000 acres on Tuesday night.

As per Forest Service procedure when there is loss of life, an accident investigation team arrived in Salmon, Idaho on the 23rd. A Type-1 Incident Management Team (IMT) will assume management of fire suppression activities on July 24.

At the time of the incident, seventy people were assigned to the fire. No other injuries were reported.

More information will be shared as it becomes available.

###